Arlington's
Safety-Net Nonprofits

Advancing the Common Good

JANUARY 2016

Marymount University Nonprofit Resource Center
in partnership with the
Arlington Community Foundation

MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Arlington COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

ABOUT THE NONPROFIT RESOURCE CENTER

The Nonprofit Resource Center leverages the role of the Arlington Community Foundation as convener and catalyst and Marymount University's commitment to service to strengthen Arlington nonprofits.

The Center is a knowledge hub for Arlington nonprofits. The Arlington Community Foundation provides funding and other material support to the Center as a means of extending its investments in Arlington nonprofits. Marymount students and faculty provide valuable services while being exposed to issues that transcend the formal academic environment.

The Center:

1. Empowers Arlington nonprofits with skills, knowledge sharing, and networking opportunities;
2. Gathers data and conducts research to inform decision-making within individual organizations and the larger Arlington community;
3. Educates the public on community needs and the role of Arlington nonprofits in addressing those needs;
4. Fosters collaboration across nonprofits, local government, businesses, and the larger community in addressing critical needs; and
5. Provides technical assistance and consulting to nonprofits by Marymount University faculty and students.

In 2015, its first year of operation, the Center provided direct services to 24 Arlington nonprofits, and facilitated focus groups involving 30 nonprofits, County and School organizations.

In the past 5 years, the Arlington Community Foundation has awarded over $1 million in grant funds to the 14 safety-net nonprofits highlighted in this report.

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INTRODUCTION

For years, Arlington has made national headlines with its high per capita income, strong County government, highly rated schools, and overall livability. Yet there is another aspect of Arlington that also speaks to our capacity and community assets: nonprofit organizations that provide a safety net for any Arlingtonian during periods of vulnerability.

This report highlights the social and economic contributions of 14 nonprofit organizations that are direct providers of the most basic necessities for a stable life: housing and shelter; health and mental health services; food; and emergency and employment assistance.

The reality in nearly every American community is that nonprofits fill critical service gaps and supplement often under-resourced local government programs. Nonprofits offer accessibility and flexibility in responding to community needs that government programs often cannot.

Through years of building relationships, the Arlington safety-net nonprofits have a deep collective knowledge of our community's needs. Some have served our community for 25, even 50 years; they draw on this wealth of experience to anticipate and respond to change. For example, when the Arlington Community Temporary Shelter (now Doorways for Women and Families) opened in 1978 as Arlington's first homeless shelter, it attempted to house women and children fleeing violence, homeless couples, and single adults in a tiny 11-bed home. It became clear these were very different populations with different needs. Today, several nonprofits work together to meet these varied needs.

Nonprofits strive to be accessible and user-friendly to community members in their most vulnerable times. Many individuals—seniors needing a supportive living environment, working parents who have lost a job and have children to feed, uninsured individuals

who face a serious health diagnosis—find immediate help from these nonprofits, who in turn are able to help these individuals access other resources provided by the County.

The work of these nonprofits is critical to Arlington County's adopted vision to be a "*diverse and inclusive world-class urban community ... where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important.*"

We *are* a caring community with an extensive safety net of organizations working together to value and support all of our residents. Life experience informs us that any of us, at one time or another, can find ourselves vulnerable. The loss of a job, a catastrophic accident, an abusive partner, or a fall into illness or addiction brings instability and the need for experienced and compassionate support. The high cost of living in Arlington means that many residents are one such setback away from instability, or have already fallen through the cracks.

We *are* a caring community with an extensive safety net of organizations working together to value and support all of our residents.

The 2015 median household income in Arlington is $106,400. In stark comparison, 8% of the population—over 17,000 residents of our community—have incomes at or below the federal poverty level, which for a family of four is a household income of $24,250. The percentage of children 18 and under living in poverty in Arlington is even higher at 11%.[1]

The high cost of living in Arlington means that many residents are one such setback away from instability, or have already fallen through the cracks.

Another measure, the Virginia Poverty Measure (VPM), takes into account the cost of living within the Beltway and sets the poverty level for a family of four at $32,678. Using the VPM, the poverty rate for Arlington County is 12.3%, or about 26,000 individuals.[2] The average median annual wage in the DC metro area for a child-care worker is $24,000; for a dishwasher, $21,200; and for a retail worker, $22,500.[3] This means that people who make our community and local businesses run—our child-care providers, house and office cleaners, retail and hotel workers, health care aides, and restaurant, construction and office workers—are likely to be living in poverty conditions while trying to support their families.

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1 United States Census Bureau, State and County Quick Facts. http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51013.html

2 Cable, Dustin A. "The Virginia Poverty Measure: An Alternative Poverty Measure for the Commonwealth," Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, May 2013. http://www.coopercenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/VirginiaPovertyMeasure_May2013_0.pdf

3 United States Department of Labor, "2014 Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates," Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014. http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_47894.htm

This report examines the value of Arlington's safety-net nonprofits in terms of avoided negative outcomes for residents experiencing or on the verge of instability. This report also highlights the social and economic value added to our community by these nonprofits.

In addition, those on fixed incomes, such as aging baby boomers, disabled individuals and veterans, are among those living in poverty in Arlington.

Within this context, this report examines the value of Arlington's safety-net nonprofits in terms of avoided negative outcomes for residents experiencing or on the verge of instability. This report also highlights the social and economic value added to our community by these nonprofits.

In examining the comprehensive community impact of these safety-net providers, several themes emerge:

1. Nonprofits are cost-effective. They are creative in leveraging resources to accomplish their missions.
2. The safety-net nonprofits multiply their impact through strategic collaboration with each other and in successful public-private partnerships with Arlington County.
3. The safety-net nonprofits reduce additional costs to the community and help residents avoid negative outcomes.
4. These nonprofits contribute to Arlington's economy—they bring in revenues, make expenditures, and employ hundreds of people.

Often, the impacts of these nonprofits in strengthening our community fabric are best conveyed through stories of Arlingtonians who have been supported by these organizations. Some of these stories are shared in this report.

Several of the safety-net nonprofits serve other jurisdictions besides Arlington. In this report, data on clients served, organizational outcomes, and financial information *specifically reflect their Arlington-based operations and impact.*

The first section of this report highlights the basic needs being met by the 14 nonprofits featured in this report. The sections that follow examine the themes described above. The conclusion identifies takeaways from this report, along with a discussion on still unmet needs in Arlington.

ARLINGTON'S SAFETY NET

HEALTH CARE FOR THE UNINSURED
Arlington Free Clinic

FOOD
Arlington Food Assistance Center

EMERGENCY FUNDS
Arlington Thrive

DAY JOBS
Shirlington Employment and Education Center

SHELTER, HOUSING AND CRISIS SERVICES
A-SPAN
Bridges to Independence
Doorways for Women and Families
Volunteers of America Chesapeake

AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING
AHC Inc.
Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing
Wesley Housing Development Corporation

SUBSTANCE ABUSE/MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT
Phoenix House Mid-Atlantic

SUPPORTING PEOPLE RELEASED FROM INCARCERATION
Guest House
Offender Aid and Restoration

SAFETY FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE
Doorways for Women and Families

Descriptions of each of the 14 safety-net nonprofits can be found in the Appendix. It should be noted while this report focuses on the 14 safety-net nonprofits listed above, there are many other nonprofits providing valuable services that improve the well-being of Arlington residents through after-school programs, education and workforce programs, arts for the community, literacy supports and more.

RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

Every community has members who are especially vulnerable. The good news is our community has a diverse safety net of nonprofits that are safeguards in the face of adversity, especially for the tens of thousands of Arlington residents who are living on the edge economically–low wage workers, unemployed or underemployed individuals, and those on fixed incomes.

HEALTH CARE FOR THE UNINSURED

A reliable source of affordable medical care for those without health insurance is a critical piece of the community's safety net.

In FY 2015, **Arlington Free Clinic** provided 8,817 medical visits for 1,611 low-income, uninsured Arlington residents. This includes on-site primary and specialty appointments and off-site specialist referrals, as well as women's health, mental health, physical therapy, optometry and dental visits.

FOOD FOR THOSE WITHOUT ENOUGH

An estimated 31,500 Arlington residents experience food insecurity, meaning they have limited consistent access to adequate food due to lack of money and other resources at times during the year.[4] Households with children and elderly people disproportionately experience food insecurity.

In FY 2015, **Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC)** distributed 3,097,031 lbs. of food and served an average of 2,041 families each week (over 9,200 individuals). One third of AFAC's clients are children under 18. Supplemental groceries from AFAC allow families to remain in their homes, workers to stay on the job, children to be ready to learn, and mothers and babies to have the nutrition they need.

EMERGENCY FUNDS

Emergency funds are essential for residents living on the edge of economic stability who experience a sudden financial crisis, such as temporary unemployment or illness, and cannot pay bills for basic needs such as rent, utilities, medical and dental care, prescriptions and transportation. Families with children are especially vulnerable.

During FY 2015, **Arlington Thrive** provided assistance to 1,474 Arlington households (1,859 adults and 895 children). Of those assisted, Thrive prevented the eviction of 326 households.

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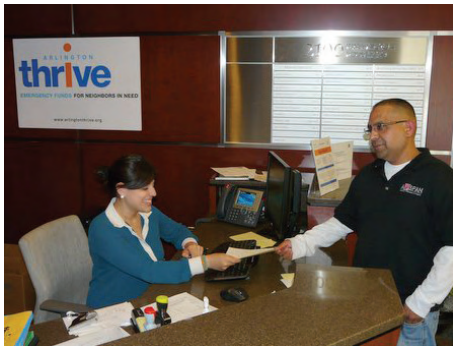
[4] Virginia Tech, Center for Survey Research, "Arlington Food Insecurity Study," July 2013. http://www.afac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Food-Insecurity-Study_FINAL.pdf

Mr. Adams' Story

"Mr. Adams" is a 74-year-old Arlington resident who has multiple health issues, including diabetes and a heart condition. He is dependent on an oxygen tank.

Mr. Adams had fallen behind on his rent because of unexpected expenses related to a death in his family. He went to the Arlington County Aging and Disability Services for assistance. There, County social workers helped Mr. Adams apply for Medicaid and asked Arlington Thrive to help pay for part of his May rent to avoid eviction.

Without Medicaid and the rental assistance from Arlington Thrive, Mr. Adams would not only be grieving the loss of a family member, but would likely be homeless. He has been able to stay in the apartment he has resided in for the last 15 years.



IMMEDIATE INCOME THROUGH DAY JOBS

Despite low wages and lack of job-related benefits, casual day jobs can bring in much needed income for those otherwise unemployed and living day-to-day. Day laborers provide businesses and homeowners immediate resources to perform some of the most physically demanding work that supports our local economy and lifestyle: demolishing buildings, digging ditches, tending lawns, loading and unloading moving trucks, and helping build homes, apartments, offices, and shopping centers.

In FY 2015, **Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC)** assisted 168 predominantly immigrant and minority day laborers from Arlington in getting 2,062 day jobs while preventing them from being exploited.

Juan's Story

Last year, Juan came to the U.S. from Guatemala to find employment so that he could send money back home to support his wife and two children. He is physically able, but lacks professional knowledge to do skilled labor. He waits up to eight hours a day at the SEEC Pavilion, hoping that someone will come by and offer him a moving or landscaping job.

Juan's persistence helps him to be selected for a job once or twice a week, making from $60 to $100 per day for an estimated monthly income of $720 per month. He pays $300 per month for an apartment shared with several other day laborers.

At least five times per week, Juan is able to get food from church groups who bring sandwiches to the workers at SEEC. And, SEEC referred him to AFAC to pick up groceries once a week.

Juan sends money back home to help his family in the spring and summer. During the winter months, he has a difficult time paying his own rent, much less sending money home. In February, his landlord received a $100 check to help with Juan's rent through a grant SEEC received from the Arlington Community Foundation to help prevent homelessness.

Motivated by his family obligations back in Guatemala, Juan has resisted joining some of the other workers who indulge in drinking after work. He has seen what alcohol does to the work ethic of those who become discouraged. He is determined to stay focused on a better future.

SHELTER, HOUSING AND CRISIS SERVICES

According to the Arlington County 2015 "Point-in-Time" homeless count, there are nearly 240 individuals in Arlington without a place to live. This count, adopted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, reflects only those living in shelters and those on the streets on the night of January 28, 2015. This method is known to undercount the actual number who are without a safe, stable home. It does not include, for example, individuals and families who are moving from friends' or relatives' homes week by week, or living in weekly rentals, cars, or other transient situations. Some are in temporary periods of instability, such as those recently unemployed or fleeing domestic violence. Others are chronically homeless and need intensive supportive services to help with health and mental health issues, substance abuse and other difficulties. Many of the uncounted are children.

Children are particularly impacted when they do not have safe, stable housing. Homeless children experience nearly every measure of risk: poor academic performance, increased chronic health conditions, and alarmingly high rates of depression, anxiety and behavioral challenges. With domestic violence as a leading cause behind family homelessness, many of these children have been exposed to significant trauma.

Four safety-net organizations provide temporary shelter and navigational support into permanent housing for individuals who are homeless or in unstable or unsafe living situations. They are: **A-SPAN (Arlington Street Peoples Assistance Network), Doorways for Women and Families, Bridges to Independence (b2i, formerly AACH), and Volunteers of America Chesapeake's Residential Program Center (RPC)**. Once safely sheltered or housed, these organizations provide clients crisis services and the tools necessary to end the cycle of homelessness while promoting self-sufficiency.

SHELTER AND HOUSING SERVICES

In FY 2015, these four organizations sheltered 923 individuals (including 121 families); and housed 300 individuals (including 69 families). A-SPAN and RPC serve adults only, while Doorways and b2i serve families and single women.

Shafiq's Story

I have a medical degree from an Afghan university and worked for several international organizations, including the UN, on HIV/AIDS prevention and more. I enjoyed the work, but the Taliban were routinely targeting international organizations, so I decided it was best to immigrate to the U.S. I first arrived in this country in 2012 on an asylum visa, returning in 2013 with my wife and children. The transition has been difficult. I don't have the credentials needed to practice medicine in the U.S. Although I speak fluent English, getting living-wage employment has been next to impossible. I've been consistently passed over for jobs, even clerical positions that didn't require much skill. So, I had no choice but to settle for work as a server/bus boy at a local country club. I even took a job as a part-time lifeguard just to bring in some money.

Our circumstance has been especially hard on my wife. She spoke no English when we arrived and is illiterate in Afghan. Unlike girls in the U.S., my wife didn't have an opportunity to go to school.

Both my wife and I are still experiencing culture shock, compounded by living in a homeless shelter. But, a strong belief in God has helped us to cope. We still have a long way to go, but Bridges to Independence's (b2i) services are helping us to get on solid footing. My children are benefitting from b2i's tutoring and computer training, and participate in a running club! Staff referred me for help with my depression. And, Marzia, my wife, is working with volunteer tutors to improve her English. The best news of all is that with b2i's help, we secured an apartment with a lease in our own name. Now, we're working on a realistic plan to re-launch my medical career.

"We still have a long way to go, but Bridges to Independence's services are helping us to get on solid footing."

AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

Affordable housing is arguably the most critical aspect of a community's livability. Our neighbors in Alexandria described the fundamental influence of affordable housing on meeting all other basic living needs by calling affordable housing the "ground zero of need".[5]

Due to significant decreases in affordable housing stock in Arlington, dramatic increases in rents, and flat or declining incomes, many in our community have difficulty finding and keeping stable housing. Especially vulnerable to high housing cost burdens are seniors, persons with disabilities, families with children, and low-income households. The squeeze on affordable housing compounds other stressors, such as poor health, job difficulties, and family instability, at both the individual and the community level.

[5] Alexandria Council of Human Services Organizations, "Meeting Needs Today: A Needs Assessment of the Alexandria Human Services System," March 2015. https://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/achso/2015%20-%20ACHSO%20HS%20Report.pdf

Aside from the safety-net aspects of affordable rental housing, economists, business leaders, and planners agree that a wide range of housing choices are essential to support the diverse jobs and wage levels needed to sustain our local economy. [6,7] Three organizations provide the bulk of Arlington's housing units that are committed to remain affordable: **AHC Inc., the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), and Wesley Housing Development Corporation (WHDC).**

As of the end of 2015, AHC (2,565), APAH (915) and WHDC (334) together provide 3,814 quality apartments that are dedicated to remain affordable for low-income households in Arlington. (Each of these nonprofit housing developers provides additional units for households at moderate income levels.)

TREATMENT FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

Substance abuse often leads to financial, health, and family instability for the individual and to those around him or her. Although the initial decision to take drugs and alcohol is voluntary for most people, the brain changes that occur over time challenge a person's self-control and ability to resist intense impulses to continue their use. Professional treatment can restore lives disrupted by substance abuse to productivity.

In FY 2015, **Phoenix House Mid-Atlantic** (formerly known as Vanguard Services) served 3,071 individuals in Arlington—including both adolescents and adults—in its outpatient and residential settings. Family involvement is an important component of recovery; an additional 500 family members were served in 2015.

HELPING PEOPLE RELEASED FROM INCARCERATION BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT

Re-entering the community after incarceration is a vulnerable time riddled with challenges. It is in both the individual's and the community's interest to support those who have been involved with the justice system. Assistance with finances, housing and employment, and potential substance abuse or mental health issues is essential to helping these individuals regain their footing rather than reoffending or becoming homeless. Efforts to assist incarcerated individuals in leading productive and responsible lives are most effective when they begin prior to release and continue as they transition into the community.

Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) and Guest House help Arlington residents who are currently or were previously incarcerated return to the community. In FY 2015, these two organizations provided services to 497 individuals while in the Arlington County Detention Facility, and supported 513 residents in their re-entry into the community. OAR also supervised 1,633 community service volunteers in Arlington County; 90% of cases were successful in their completion of the court's order.

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6 Arlington County, Virginia, "Affordable Housing Master Plan," September 2015. https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2015/09/ADOPTED-AHMP.pdf

7 Bipartisan Policy Center, "Housing America's Future: New Directions for National Policy," February 2013. http://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/default/files/BPC_Housing%20Report_web_0.pdf

Mary's Story

I was in prison for 8 ½ years due to an addiction to prescription medication, which slowly became a heroin addiction that took me to the streets. When I was sent to prison, I just wanted to die. But I felt that I had to take advantage of all learning situations in prison; otherwise I was cheating my son and daughter even more than they were already being cheated. I took every class available to me in the Nursery and Landscape Program.

Then came the big test: my release. I was released to Guest House over two years ago and was immediately told about OAR. I received one-on-one coaching from OAR, which was a great help in dealing with the discouragement I was facing trying to reintegrate back into society. I tried to get employment at every nursery and greenhouse in Northern Virginia. I was turned away as soon as I told them where I received my education and training. Let's face it, statistics are not good for returning citizens.

My OAR case manager asked me if I had ever thought about starting my own landscaping business. That was all it took: one person to believe in me gave me the strength to go for it. A man I met while speaking about OAR at Cherrydale Baptist Church became my first client. He also spread the word that I did good work, and more clients started calling. OAR helped me design and purchase business cards. My business is called Path to Freedom because that is exactly what it has been to me. After getting my business license and restricted driver's license, I bought a Tahoe and trailer.

I don't know where I would be today without OAR. Now I am giving back. I have been able to hire some OAR clients part-time, and two full-time. Can you imagine the joy it gives me to hire people with a criminal record? You should try it!

"That was all it took: one person to believe in me gave me the strength to go for it."

SAFETY FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Domestic violence comes in many forms and impacts our entire community. It isolates survivors and victims from social and financial help, often leaving them to choose between returning to their abuser or becoming homeless. This decision is even harder for people with children, fearing they cannot provide for their basic needs without living with abuse. Victims require a spectrum of life-saving, supportive and educational services to help them leave behind a life of domestic violence or to heal from sexual victimization. With assistance, these individuals and families go on to begin a new life of stability, dignity, and self-sufficiency.

In FY 2015, **Doorways for Women and Families'** hotline responded to 1,244 calls involving 2,012 adults and children impacted by domestic and sexual violence. 88% of survivors were able to identify their safety options through participation in the development of a safety plan.

LEVERAGING RESOURCES

Arlington's safety-net nonprofits are cost-effective at providing high-quality affordable services by leveraging donated goods and services and attracting corporate, philanthropic and public funds. Examples are provided in this section.

- In the past year, Arlington Free Clinic provided ongoing medical care to over 1,600 uninsured community members by coordinating the services of over 500 volunteers (including 170 physicians) and accessing several million dollars in donated medications.

A look at the value delivered to a diabetic patient highlights how this works at the individual level. Medical treatment for diabetic patients is costly due to the need for multiple primary care visits per year, frequent lab tests, annual eye and foot exams, medications and supplies, and education. The average annual market cost to care for a diabetic patient is approximately $8,000.[8] The fact that the Free Clinic provides this care free of charge to their approximately 230 diabetic patients highlights the degree to which they are able to leverage donated services and financial contributions.

The average annual market cost to care for a diabetic patient is approximately $8,000.[8] The fact that the Free Clinic provides this care free of charge to their approximately 230 diabetic patients highlights the degree to which they are able to leverage donated services and financial contributions.

- The Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) receives no Federal or State funds and depends entirely on local support. A George Mason study found that, in FY 2015, AFAC leveraged an investment of $378,000 from Arlington County with $2.9 million in privately raised funds, $2.2 million in donated food, and 35,000 hours of volunteer time valued at $875,000 for a total of $6 million - a return in revenues by AFAC on the County's investment of nearly 16-to-1. [9]
- AHC Inc., the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), and Wesley Housing Development Corporation leverage millions of dollars in resources to build and preserve affordable housing through an innovative partnership with Arlington County. The key leveraging tool is Arlington County's Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF), which provides gap financing through revolving loans to nonprofit developers.

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8 American Diabetes Association, "Economic costs of diabetes in the US in 2012," Diabetes care 36, no. 4 (2013): 1033-1046. http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/36/4/1033.long

9 George Mason Center for Regional Analysis. "The Economic Effects of the Arlington Food Assistance Center," July 2015.

Since its creation in 1988, AHIF has helped to create the majority of Arlington's affordable rental units that benefit low-income households. The revolving fund is financed through general revenue, developer contributions, and repayments of prior AHIF loans.

AHIF dollars help developers leverage additional loans from private banks and investment partners. Typically, each AHIF dollar borrowed from Arlington County leverages three to four dollars in private investments.

Affordable housing communities also serve as hubs for other valuable community resources by providing space and infrastructure for programming. For example, AHC provides office space for Arlington County's Community Outreach Program in three of their large apartment communities. There, residents are referred to Arlington County health and nutrition programs, emergency services, financial counseling, transportation information, employment opportunities, and more. Annually, AHC Community Outreach Centers provide access to local services to more than 500 residents.

Typically, each AHIF dollar borrowed from Arlington County leverages three to four dollars in private investments.

Annually, AHC Community Outreach Centers provide access to local services to more than 500 residents.

MULTIPLYING IMPACT THROUGH COLLABORATION

The safety-net nonprofits multiply their impact through strategic collaboration with each other and in public-private partnerships with Arlington County. Each organization focuses on what it does best while ensuring that clients access additional services they need from other organizations. For example, Arlington County Police depend on Doorways for Women and Families to provide safe shelter for those fleeing domestic violence. Individuals who have completed the Arlington County Employment Center's Arlington Works! program obtain new, professional work attire from Arlington Thrive. Patients at the Arlington Free Clinic with a cancer diagnosis are given a checklist of supports they will need, including a referral for supplemental food from AFAC. A-SPAN's partnership with Arlington County and Virginia Hospital Center offers medical respite care to Arlington residents who are homeless and being released from the hospital with an acute medical issue. Recovering patients can stay in medical respite rooms in the Homeless Services Center outfitted with medical beds provided by the hospital and attended by a full-time A-SPAN Nurse Practitioner.

A-SPAN, Doorways, Bridges, and Volunteers of America Chesapeake, along with other nonprofits included in this report, are key players in Arlington's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. The Plan emphasizes the "Housing First" strategy based on studies that have shown that people can be better served with needed supports by first aiding them in obtaining long-term housing beyond emergency shelter.

When an individual or family is homeless or on the brink of homelessness, they are often not in the position to know which door to walk through to get the help they need. Arlington County has worked with the safety-net nonprofits to build a centralized intake process. Volunteers of America Chesapeake is contracted to provide one staff member to support the assessment of client needs.

Those who are at risk of losing housing are referred to these nonprofits for counseling, food, financial and health supports, and access to more affordable housing. Those who do become homeless are moved into emergency shelters and re-housed as rapidly as possible with ongoing services to help them maintain their housing. Avoiding or limiting the time someone spends on the street reduces their exposure to risk factors such as deteriorating health, and decreases their chance of becoming chronically homeless.

Each organization focuses on what it does best while ensuring that clients access additional services they need from other organizations.

Anita's Story

Due to medical complications experienced during pregnancy, "Anita" was placed on bed rest and lost her job, thus creating financial dependency on her abusive husband. After her baby arrived, the abuse worsened. With the help of Arlington County Police, the family arrived at Doorways Domestic Violence Safehouse.

Just 23 years old, Anita had a high school diploma, but years of living in abuse had prevented her from pursuing college or career goals. Having grown up in an abusive home, Anita knew very little about how to care for her infant.

The Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing agreed to rent to Anita while she continued her progress toward independence, knowing she would have Doorways' support for the security deposit, first month's rent, and utilities for several months while she continued to progress toward independence. Anita was referred to AFAC for food for her family while she worked part-time and enrolled in a job training program.

Doorways worked with Anita to develop a budget for monthly expenses, to repair her credit, and to resolve issues from identity theft committed by her abusive partner. The Doorways Court Advocate assisted Anita in obtaining a protective order, child custody, visitation, and child support. Anita's counselor helped her find quality affordable childcare enabling her to work, and met with her weekly to strengthen her parenting skills.

Today, the family is thriving in their safe, stable home and Anita is a proud working mother providing for her family.

COST SAVINGS TO THE COMMUNITY

Every dollar invested in addiction treatment programs yields a return of between $4 and $7 in reduced drug-related crime, criminal justice costs, and theft.

A "social return on investment" perspective on these community organizations acknowledges the value delivered and costs avoided, and indicates that investments in these nonprofits are responsible ones. Several examples of the return on investment generated by the safety-net nonprofits follow.

- Substance abuse and addiction lead to financial, health, and family instability that have costs to the individual, their family, and the community as a whole. Phoenix House's goal in treating substance use disorders is to allow individuals to be healthy, employed, and productive members of the community. Providing these treatment services lessens the financial burden on the community by reducing homelessness, crime, domestic violence, emergency room visits, and chronic health care issues. According to several conservative estimates, every dollar invested in addiction treatment programs yields a return of between $4 and $7 in reduced drug-related crime, criminal justice costs, and theft. When savings related to healthcare are included, total savings can exceed costs by a ratio of 12-to-1.[10]
- In examining the social return on investment of AFAC's services, a George Mason study estimates that groceries from AFAC help to avoid upwards of $4 million in health care costs associated with food insecurity in Arlington County. Further, the groceries provided by AFAC improve the ability of students to learn in school by addressing their hunger and improving their nutrition. [11]

The cost of maintaining one incarcerated person for one year in Virginia is at least $25,000.[12] In contrast, Guest House services come at a cost of $12,500 for one woman for one year; this is generally a one-time cost.

- Re-entry programs for ex-offenders create significant savings for tax-payers. Guest House supports individuals currently and formerly incarcerated in transitioning to become productive citizens in our community. The cost of maintaining one incarcerated person for one year in Virginia is at least $25,000.[12] This is generally a recurring cost as many individuals will serve multiyear sentences, and about 67% of individuals without reentry support will be re-incarcerated within three years.[13] In contrast, Guest House services come at a cost of $12,500 for one woman for one year; this is generally a one-time cost. Both OAR and Guest House have recidivism rates of less than 10% for clients active in their programs.
- All high-need patients of the Arlington Free Clinic are provided a nurse case manager to help manage their complex conditions and navigate their specialized care needs, which in turn reduces unnecessary visits and cost burdens to local hospital emergency rooms.

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[10] United States Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, "Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide," National Institute on Drug Abuse, Third Edition, Revised December 2012. https://www.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/podat_1.pdf

[11] George Mason Center for Regional Analysis. "The Economic Effects of the Arlington Food Assistance Center," July 2015. http://www.afac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Food-Insecurity-Study_FINAL.pdf

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Nonprofits by definition do not make a profit, but they do generate revenues to support their services, and they make significant expenditures in delivering these services. Like other businesses, they pay taxes and hire employees (who in turn pay taxes and spend money on local consumer goods and services). The FY 2015 economic impacts of the 14 nonprofits covered in this report are as follows:

- Over $58 million in revenues were generated in FY 2015. Of these revenues:
  - > Nearly $8 million were cash revenues from Federal and State government sources.
  - > $6.5 million were funds from Arlington County, representing 11% of the combined total revenues of all 14 nonprofits. The actual percentage of any given nonprofit's revenues from Arlington County varies widely, ranging from 1% to 90%. Eight of the 14 nonprofits received 25% or under of their funding from the County; of these, six received less than 6% of their funding from the County.
  - > Nearly $17 million were in cash contributions from foundations, special events, businesses, individuals, the faith community, and others.
  - > Just over $18 million in revenues were from fees and contracts that are significant sources for four of the nonprofits only. Phoenix House receives fees from Medicaid, government contracts, and private insurance for its services. The three nonprofit housing providers—AHC Inc, APAH, and WHDC—receive the majority of their income from property operations and project management fees.
  - > Nearly $9 million were in-kind revenues of volunteer time, donated food, and supplies. Of these, skilled volunteers contributed expertise conservatively valued at $3.03 million, and unskilled volunteers contributed expertise valued at $1.74 million.
- Total FY 2015 operating expenditures of these 14 nonprofits were nearly $45 million.
- 444 individuals were employed (296 full-time and 148 part-time).
- Nearly $24 million in salaries, wages, and benefits were paid.
- $1.8 million in employment taxes were paid.
- $6.6 million in property taxes were paid.

Again, these figures are limited to the Arlington operations of these 14 nonprofits, some of which operate in other jurisdictions.

Approximately one in every four employees of the safety-net nonprofits lives in Arlington; many say that they cannot afford to live here. Nonprofit directors report this is a particular challenge for attracting and retaining employees. Several nonprofits report related challenges with ensuring 24-hour operations. Employees need to get to work in inclement weather, at all hours of the day and night, or in emergency situations where substantial travel time to or from home is a barrier to quality safety-net response.

Over $58 million in revenues were generated in FY 2015.

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CONCLUSION

TAKEAWAY #1: THE SAFETY-NET NONPROFITS STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY

The high cost of living in Arlington means many families and individuals are one setback away from instability or have already fallen through the cracks. The safety-net nonprofits fill a critical gap in services not only for the very poor, but also for those community members whose incomes are above the very low threshold for eligibility for subsidized child care, Medicaid, and food stamps, yet who still struggle with the market cost of goods and basic services in Arlington.

The safety-net nonprofits contribute their voices as advocates for sound policy and community priorities. Nonprofits have a first row seat as witnesses to the needs of our community and reforms needed at the local, state, and national level. The housing organizations and their residents work tirelessly to communicate the critical need to retain housing that is affordable for low and middle income individuals in Arlington. Doorways for Women and Families is raising community consciousness on the extent and nature of youth homelessness in Arlington and works with law enforcement and the justice system for improved responsiveness to domestic and sexual violence victims. Offender Aid and Restoration and its clients have advocated for eliminating the stigma created for ex-offenders searching to contribute through work in the "Ban the Box" campaign. The Arlington Food Assistance Center serves as a repository of information and data on food insecurity issues in Arlington.

Nonprofits have a first row seat as witnesses to the needs of our community and reforms needed at the local, state, and national level.

TAKEAWAY #2: THE SAFETY-NET NONPROFITS LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND MULTIPLY IMPACT THROUGH COLLABORATION

This report provides details on the value added to Arlington by each of the 14 featured nonprofit safety-net providers. Most striking, however is their *collective* contribution to our community. They multiply their impact through strategic collaboration with each other.

Aside from working with each other to address safety-net needs, these organizations complement and supplement the County's investments in human services staffing and programs. Because these nonprofits are in the community and neighborhoods, they act as outreach agents for more isolated individuals. And, when individuals go through the County's centralized intake center, the staff there can draw from the wide range of nonprofit community-based services offered that best fit any given person's needs.

In addition, this report demonstrates that nonprofits further multiply their impact by leveraging millions of dollars in donated goods and services and attracting millions of dollars in corporate, philanthropic, and public funds.

TAKEAWAY #3: THE SAFETY-NET NONPROFITS PREVENT HIGHER COSTS AND NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

The social and economic impacts of Arlington's safety net described in this report represent a one-year snapshot. Over the years, the impacts of improved lives, costs avoided, resources leveraged, and value to the Arlington community in terms of employment and taxes accumulate for even greater impact. Keeping individuals and families housed and providing them with food, health care or emergency financial assistance prevents them from the expensive and destabilizing process of becoming homeless and further disconnected from productive lives in the community.

TAKEAWAY #4: THE SAFETY-NET NONPROFITS CONTRIBUTE TO ARLINGTON'S ECONOMY

They bring in revenues, make expenditures, and employ hundreds of people. They are an important part of Arlington's success as a caring, sustainable community supporting a healthy diversity of household income levels.

Looking Ahead

The safety-net nonprofits also have a front-row seat on *unmet* needs. For example:

- In FY 2015, AFAC saw an increase in demand for food of 19.4% over the previous year, which itself saw a 26% increase over the prior year. Recent cuts to the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps) have forced even more families to seek help.
- When AHC recently opened The Shell with 83 new affordable apartments on Columbia Pike, they quickly faced a waiting list of 500 people before they stopped adding names to the list. The number of housing units affordable to low-and moderate-income households in Arlington has declined precipitously since 2000. About 13,500 rental units affordable to low-income households were lost from the County's housing stock through rent increases, condo conversion, and redevelopment in the period from 2000 to 2013. Nearly this same amount will be need to be returned to the County's affordable housing stock to meet the projected needs in Arlington by 2040.[14]

In FY 2015, AFAC saw an increase in demand for food of 19.4% over the previous year, which itself saw a 26% increase over the prior year.

[14] "Affordable Housing Master Plan," Arlington County, Virginia, September 2015. https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2015/09/ADOPTED-AHMP.pdf

For each Free Clinic patient, there are about six others who do not have insurance and could qualify for Free Clinic services.

- Even with the introduction of the Affordable Care Act, demand for Arlington Free Clinic services remains so high that there is a monthly lottery for accepting new patients. There are 11,000 low-income, uninsured adult Arlingtonians, and the Free Clinic is the medical home of 1,600 of these individuals. That means that for each Free Clinic patient, there are about six others who do not have insurance and could qualify for Free Clinic services.
- Last year, Guest House received over 378 applications, averaging *more than one per day*, for its residential program for female ex-offenders, and yet could only house 66 women in the program.
- When Arlington County consolidated all Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline calls to Doorways for Women and Families, calls to Doorways' Hotline increased by 53% in one year.

All 14 of the safety-net nonprofits see similar unmet needs. Yet, they remain solutions-oriented and are not overwhelmed by the magnitude of the need.

Investing in any of the safety-net nonprofits creates value for the whole community. Whether an individual community member, business leader, head of a family foundation, or decision-maker for local budgets, everyone has a role in supporting the valuable work of these safety-net nonprofits, and in helping to address the unmet needs.

> "When government, businesses, and nonprofits work together to address common goals, each doing what they do best, public and private dollars can often be used more efficiently—and to get better results."
>
> *Beyond Charity, Recognizing Return on Investment, Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington, 2007*

APPENDIX

Brief Overviews of Arlington Safety-Net Nonprofits

AHC Inc.

www.ahcinc.org

AHC Inc. was founded in 1975 to provide quality, stable affordable rental housing for low income individuals and families in Arlington. As of the end of 2015, AHC, Inc. has developed 2,565 units for low-income households in 24 apartment communities in Arlington. In addition to providing affordable apartments, AHC partners with more than 30 community organizations to strengthen neighborhoods and empower its residents through education programs for children and teens, services for seniors and more.

Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC)

www.afac.org

Now in its 27th year, AFAC promotes dignified access to free nutritious food for all Arlingtonians in need. AFAC helps relieve its clients' food budgets, thereby allowing them to purchase other necessities without sacrificing their health and nutrition needs. AFAC distributes groceries out of its main warehouse and 17 other distribution sites around the County, including affordable housing properties, schools, churches, and neighborhood community centers. In FY 2015, AFAC distributed 3,097,031 lbs. of food, serving an average of 2,041 families each week.

Arlington Free Clinic (AFC)

www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org

Since 1994, AFC has provided free, high-quality, comprehensive medical care to low-income adult Arlington residents. Most Clinic patients work; many are parents; and all lack access to any other form of affordable care including Medicaid, employer-provided coverage or "Obamacare". Demand remains so high that there is a monthly lottery for accepting new patients. In addition, AFC has a reserved number of patient slots for referrals from Virginia Hospital Center, other safety-net nonprofits, and the Arlington County Department of Human Services. All high-need patients are provided a nurse case manager to help manage their conditions and access to pro bono specialized care through partnering providers in the community. In FY 2015, AFC provided 8,817 medical visits for 1,611 low-income, uninsured Arlington residents.

Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH)

www.apah.org

APAH, founded in 1989, provides 915 apartments affordable to low-income households in 14 locations throughout Arlington. Some units in APAH's properties are dedicated as permanent supportive housing to persons with disabilities and to those coming out of homelessness. APAH offers its residents workshops on financial planning, healthy cooking, workplace skills, parenting, and more. Residents are also given individualized assistance with emergency funding, applying for housing grants, life skills, food bank groceries, and connection to health care services.

Arlington Thrive

www.arlingtonthrive.org

Arlington Thrive (formerly AMEN) provides same-day, emergency financial assistance to Arlington residents who experience a sudden financial crisis, such as temporary unemployment or illness, and cannot pay bills for basic needs like rent, utilities, medical and dental care, prescriptions and transportation. Thrive Clients are perhaps one setback away from eviction: the working poor; unemployed or under-employed individuals; and elderly and disabled people on fixed incomes. During FY 2015, Thrive provided assistance to 1,474 households (1,859 adults and 895 children). Arlington Thrive celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2015.

A-SPAN

www.a-span.org

Founded in 1991, A-SPAN strives to prevent homelessness by linking individuals (including veterans) facing eviction to housing. The chronically homeless and those suffering from mental illness and/or substance abuse are transitioned into permanent housing with case managers to help them retain their housing. Those who are currently homeless are served by A-SPAN's Homeless Services Center, opened in 2015 in partnership with Arlington County. The Center provides homeless adults meals, shelter, laundry facilities, a full-time nurse practitioner, counseling and job training. In addition, the Center has a 5-bed medical respite program for those needing to recover from an illness or medical procedure. For individuals still living on the streets, A-SPAN outreach workers and volunteers provide meals and linkages to services 365 nights per year. In FY 2015, A-SPAN provided emergency shelter to 463 adults and served 868 in its day program. In addition, 88 individuals were moved into housing.

Bridges to Independence (b2i)

www.bridges2.org

Since its founding in 1985 as the Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, b2i has moved from crisis response and temporary shelter for families to focusing on long-term economic self-sufficiency and permanent housing. b2i provides families who have lost their home with a safe, supportive apartment for three to four months. b2i works with the families to address challenges including medical conditions, domestic violence, substance abuse, traumatic brutality in their home countries, parenting problems, and more. After their shelter stay, four out of every five families are able to move into longer-term affordable rentals with ongoing b2i services. In FY 2015, Bridges to Independence graduated 19 families into homes with their own lease.

Doorways for Women and Families

www.doorwaysva.org

Founded in 1978, Doorways has evolved to offer comprehensive services for persons impacted by domestic and sexual violence, as well as family homelessness. Doorways helps families with no safe place to live by providing emergency shelter, supportive housing post-shelter, and comprehensive services. Children represent over half of Doorways clients; staff help them heal from the traumatic effects of homelessness and domestic violence. In FY 2015, Doorways sheltered 77 adults and 81 children fleeing domestic violence and/or experiencing homelessness. In addition, Doorways supported 50 adults and 85 children into stable apartments of their own. Each household receives holistic services to enhance financial, employment, child, mental and physical wellbeing. Doorways also provides specialized services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault regardless of their housing status. These include a 24-Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline, hospital accompaniment, and court advocacy for survivors of domestic and sexual assault. In FY 2015, Doorways' Hotline responded to 1,244 calls involving 2,012 adults and children impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

Guest House

www.friendsofguesthouse.org

Founded in 1974, Guest House helps women make successful transitions from incarceration back into the community. Guest House case managers focus on safety-net needs including mental health and substance abuse counseling and mentoring; and directly or through other partners, assistance with issues such as health care, education, employment, child custody, and referrals to other community services. In FY 2015, Guest House provided comprehensive reentry services for 100 Arlington women and their families. In addition, Guest House worked with 34 women through its pre-release mentoring program in the Arlington County Detention Center.

Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR)

www.oaronline.org

OAR seeks to aid and restore individuals currently and formerly incarcerated as productive citizens in our community. OAR offers educational, vocational, and life skills courses inside the Arlington County Detention Facility (ACDF). As individuals are released from incarceration, OAR offers services such as long-term, intensive case

management, employment assistance, transportation, food, clothing, and IDs, and also links individuals to other safety-net nonprofits for services. For men and women given community service as an alternative sentence, OAR refers them to nonprofit and government entities. In FY 2015, OAR provided 413 individuals in Arlington County with reentry services post-release and provided services to 463 individuals inside ACDF. OAR also supervised 1,633 community service volunteers in Arlington.

Phoenix House Mid-Atlantic (formerly Vanguard Services)

www.phoenixhouse.org

Phoenix House has provided treatment for those suffering from substance abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders in Arlington for more than 53 years. Depending on their needs, Phoenix House's clients are offered medical and psychiatric work-ups, medical stabilization, residential treatment, outpatient care, and sober housing. Individuals of all ages and from all walks of life can obtain services in one of the twelve Arlington-based Phoenix House programs. In FY 2015, Phoenix House served 3,071 individuals in Arlington—including both adolescents and adults—in both outpatient and residential settings. Family involvement is an important component of recovery; an additional 500 family members were served in FY 2015.

Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC)

www.seecjobs.org

SEEC assists day laborers from South Arlington who seek employment with a safe venue where they can await employers looking for workers. Over ten local churches donate meals and warm clothing to the laborers while they wait for work. In FY 2015, 168 predominantly immigrant and minority day laborers from Arlington found 2,062 day jobs through SEEC. In addition, SEEC staff screened and referred over 400 immigrant families who reside in Arlington to AFAC to receive food. Since 2012, SEEC has offered green housecleaning training to over 120 immigrant women to make their skills more marketable. In November 2015, SEEC launched a Latina Business Development Project to support 25 immigrant women in starting their own business.

Volunteers of America (VOA) Chesapeake, Residential Program Center (RPC)

www.voachesapeake.org/rpc

VOA provides a 44-bed homeless shelter for single adults in Arlington with case management focused on navigating clients into housing. Some of the shelter's residents have completed the substance abuse treatment program at RPC and choose to move into the shelter instead of returning to the streets to increase their chances of recovery. In FY 2015, RPC's Emergency Shelter program served 162 homeless men and women who were without housing and other supports. Out of the 162 served, 27 individuals were navigated into permanent housing.

Wesley Housing Development Corporation

www.wesleyhousing.org

Founded in 1974, Wesley Housing Development Corporation provides 334 affordable apartments for low-income households in 6 locations throughout Arlington. Like AHC and APAH, Wesley supplements its housing mission with supportive services and programs to increase their residents' independence, financial literacy, and employability.

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Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing: Nina Janopaul, President and CEO
Arlington Thrive: Geraldine Shannon, Executive Director
A-SPAN: Kathleen Sibert, President and CEO
Bridges to Independence: Michael O'Rourke, Executive Director
Doorways for Women and Families: Caroline Jones, President and CEO
Guest House: Kari Galloway, Executive Director
Offender Aid and Restoration: Elizabeth Jones, Executive Director
Phoenix House Mid-Atlantic: Deborah Taylor, Executive Director
Shirlington Employment and Education Center: Andres Tobar, Executive Director
Volunteers of America Chesapeake, RPC: Mary Kenion, Homeless Services Program Director
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In a survey of 1,500 nonprofit organizations, Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies found that nonprofit leaders are in widespread agreement about the core values their organizations embody—powerful values of caring, effectiveness, reliability, responsiveness, empowerment, productiveness, and social and cultural enrichment.

NONPROFITS ARE...

PRODUCTIVE: Creating jobs and economic value; mobilizing assets to address public programs; enhancing local economic vitality

EMPOWERING: Mobilizing and empowering citizens; contributing to public discourse; providing opportunities for civic engagement for the public good

EFFECTIVE: Providing programs and services of the highest quality at reasonable cost; making a difference in the lives of individuals and the community

ENRICHING: Giving expression to central human values; providing opportunities for people to learn and grow; fostering intellectual, scientific, cultural, and spiritual development; preserving culture and history; promoting creativity

RELIABLE: Resilient and demonstrating staying power both in good times and bad; operating in a trustworthy and accountable manner

RESPONSIVE: Responding to clients, patrons, and communities; meeting needs that the market and government don't meet; pursuing innovative approaches when needed

CARING: Serving underserved populations; providing services/programs at reduced or no cost to disadvantaged populations; community-focused

Source: Lester M. Salamon, Stephanie L. Geller, and Chelsea L. Newhouse, "What Do Nonprofits Stand For? Renewing the nonprofit value commitment," Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies, 2012.

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